



## THE 2520 NON-PROPHECY

by **Pastor Stephen Bohr**

### **The Adventist Prophetic Perspective**

For Seventh-day Adventists there is no date which is more important than October 22, 1844. The year of this date is determined by linking the 70-week prophecy of Daniel 9 with the 2300 days of Daniel 8. The month and the day are determined by the date of the Day of Atonement in Leviticus 23. The 2520 prophecy is not needed to prove that the judgment began on October 22, 1844. The argument from Daniel 8 and 9 and Leviticus 23 is ironclad. The central argument of the seventh-month movement was the 2300 day prophecy. The 2520 supposedly provides us with the year but it does not meet the test as to the day and the month. October 22, 1844 was reached by a study of Daniel 8:14 not Leviticus 26.

### **What is the 2520 prophecy?**

The 2520 non-prophecy is based on Leviticus 26 where presumably God promised to punish Israel seven times for her apostasy. The seven times are interpreted according to the year/day principle with each time or year having 360 days. Thus,  $7 \times 360 = 2520$

William Miller believed that the 2520 began in **677 BC** when king Manasseh of Judah was taken prisoner to Babylon. Applying the year/day principle from 677 BC to 1844, excluding the year zero we have 2520 years.

Some 2520 proponents actually believe there are two 2520 periods, one from 677 BC to 1844 and the other from 723 BC to 1844. We will not deal with this particular nuance in this presentation because it goes beyond the time and space that we have for this presentation.

### **The 1843 Chart**

The 1843 prophetic chart was the power point that was used by the Advent Movement evangelists leading up to 1844. It contained several of the key historical events from Daniel and Revelation with their respective dates. In the upper right hand corner of the chart was the so called prophecy of the 2520. Those who believe that there is a 2520 prophecy have claimed that Ellen White endorsed the 1843 chart and therefore she also endorsed the 2520 prophecy that was on the chart:

*"I have seen that the 1843 chart was directed by the hand of the Lord, and that it should not be altered; that the figures were as He wanted them; that His hand was over and hid a mistake in*

*some of the figures, so that none could see it, until His hand was removed." Early Writings, p. 74*

This statement makes clear that some of the figures in the 1843 chart were mistaken because it was God's will that it be so. But why would the hand of God cover a mistake in their calculations? Ellen White explains the reason:

*"I saw the people of God joyful in expectation, looking for their Lord. But God designed to prove them. His hand covered a mistake in the reckoning of the prophetic periods. Those who were looking for their Lord did not discover this mistake and the most learned men who opposed the time also failed to see it. God designed that His people should meet with a disappointment [in 1843]. The time passed, and those who had looked with joyful expectation for their Savior were sad and disheartened, while those who had not loved the appearing of Jesus, but embraced the message through fear, were pleased that He did not come at the time of expectation. Their profession had not affected the heart and purified the life. The passing of the time was well calculated to reveal such hearts. They were the first to turn and ridicule the sorrowful, disappointed ones who really loved the appearing of their Savior. I saw the wisdom of God in proving His people and giving them a searching test to discover those who would shrink and turn back in the hour of trial." Early Writings, pp. 235, 236*

In another statement Ellen White explained that the chart could not be altered, except by inspiration:

*"I saw that the truth should be made plain upon tables that the earth and the fullness thereof is the Lord's, and that necessary means should not be spared to make it plain. I saw that the old chart was directed by the Lord, and that not a figure of it should be altered except by inspiration. I saw that the figures of the chart were as God would have them and that His hand was over and hid a mistake in some of the figures, so that none should see it till His hand was removed." Spaulding Magan Collection, p. 1*

The question is: When was the chart first altered and who provided the inspiration to do so? Did God, by inspiration, tell Ellen White that the chart should be altered?

The answer is that the chart was altered by the Millerites themselves after the people were disappointed because Jesus did not come in 1843. The alteration took place between 1843 and 1844 when the Millerites realized that they had not taken into account the 'year zero'. Who gave them authority to alter the chart? According to Ellen White, only inspiration could do so.

At this time Ellen White had not yet been called to be a prophet (she was called in December of 1844) so it was not she, by inspiration, that altered the chart. By what authority, then, did the Millerites alter the chart? The answer is that the Millerites studied inspiration (the Bible) and realized their mistake. In other words, when the faithful ones were disappointed when Jesus did not come in 1843, they went to inspiration (the Bible) and discovered the reason for their mistake and as a result the chart was altered. The date was thus changed by inspiration. When they realized that there was no 'year zero' the date was changed from 1843 to 1844.

A renewed study of **inspired Scripture** is what led God's hand to be removed and when the hand of the Lord was removed the people understood the mistake that they had made in their reckoning. Ellen White clearly explains how the hand of the Lord was removed so that the chart could be altered by inspiration:

*"Those faithful, disappointed ones, who could not understand why their Lord did not come, were not left in darkness. Again they were **led to their Bibles** [to inspiration] to search the prophetic periods. The **hand of the Lord was removed from the figures**, and the mistake was explained. They saw that the prophetic periods reached to 1844, and that the same evidence which they had presented to show that the prophetic periods closed in 1843, proved that they would terminate in 1844."* Early Writings, p. 236

Ellen White uses the expression 'by inspiration' to refer to the testimony of the Bible:

*"The genealogy of our race, as given **by inspiration**, traces back its origin, not to a line of developing germs, mollusks, and quadrupeds, but to the great Creator."* Conflict and Courage, p. 11

*"The highest testimony to the greatness of Moses, the judgment passed upon his life **by Inspiration** is, 'There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face.'"* Deuteronomy 34:10. Education, p. 64

**Inspiration**, in giving us the history of the Flood, has explained wonderful mysteries, that geology, independent of **inspiration**, never could." Lift Him Up, p. 59

**Inspiration** faithfully records the faults of good men, those who were distinguished by the favor of God; indeed, their faults are more fully presented than their virtues." Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 238

After the chart was altered the first time, the chart was once more altered by inspiration when James White examined the inspired evidence from Scripture for the 2520 and found it wanting. Ellen White could have rebuked her husband's repudiation of the 2520 and yet she did not. Thus the Spirit of Prophecy thus **indirectly** reaffirmed what James White had discovered from his study of inspiration. By not repudiating her husband's clear article on the 2520 and by stating that the prophecy of the 2300 days is the **longest** in the Bible Ellen White tacitly agreed with her husband. After all, if the 2300 day prophecy was the longest, then the 2520 which is **clearly longer** was no prophecy at all!

*"The experience of the disciples who preached the 'gospel of the kingdom' at the first advent of Christ, had its counterpart in the experience of those who proclaimed the message of His second advent. As the disciples went out preaching, "The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand," so Miller and his associates proclaimed that the **longest and last** prophetic period brought to view in the Bible was about to expire, that the judgment was at hand, and the everlasting kingdom was to be ushered in. The preaching of the disciples in regard to time was based on the seventy weeks of **Daniel 9**. The message given by Miller and his associates announced the termination of the **2300 days of Daniel 8:14**, of which the **seventy weeks** form a*

part. The preaching of each was based upon the fulfillment of a different portion of the same great prophetic period." The Great Controversy, p. 351

In explaining the meaning of Revelation 10:6, Ellen White once again stated that the longest prophecy of the Bible is the 2300 days. If this is true then the so-called 2520 prophecy is no prophecy at all:

*"This time, which the Angel declares with a solemn oath, is not the end of this world's history, neither of probationary time, but of prophetic time, which would precede the advent of our Lord. That is, the people will not have another message upon definite time. After this period of time, reaching from 1842 to 1844, there can be no definite tracing of the prophetic time. The longest reckoning reaches to the autumn of 1844."* Christ Triumphant, p. 344

Contrary to these two clear statements by Ellen White, William Miller and his associates did not believe that the 2300 day prophecy was the longest. They believed that the 2520 was longer. Notice what Joshua V. Himes, a close associate of William Miller, had this say about what he believed to be the longest prophecy:

*"That we have entered upon a most deeply affecting season, all must admit. That the longest prophetic period which brings the end to view, the seven times, with which we may suppose all the others would be squared, in their termination, ends with this autumn, appears very evident; that we are in the last of the last year of the 2300, is still more evident; and the whole aspect of the world around us, morally and politically, agrees very well with the inspired portrait of "the time of harvest."* Joshua V. Himes, The Advent Times and Signs of the Times Reporter, volume 8 (August 7, 1844 to February 5, 1845), No. 8, September 25, 1844 p. 62

*"One period cannot be paramount to another period, unless its commencement and termination are marked by a greater amount of evidence. Each period must be fulfilled with equal precision, independent of its length. It is consequently not on one period alone that we rely, but on all the prophetic periods harmoniously terminating at about the same time, proved by conclusive evidence independent of the termination of each other. If the longest period was to be paramount, the seven times would take precedence of all others."* Joshua V. Himes, Signs of the Times and Expositor of Prophecy, volume 6 (August 23, 1843 to January 31, 1844) No. 21 (January 10, 1844 170).

## **Did Ellen White Agree with Every Iota of What She Endorsed?**

By way of analogy, Ellen White had some very positive things to say about Uriah Smith's book, Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation:

*"The light given was that Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation, The Great Controversy, and Patriarchs and Prophets, would make their way. They contain the very message the people must have, the special light God had given His people. The angels of God would prepare the way for these books in the hearts of the people."* Colporteur Ministry, p. 123, 124 (written in 1899)

*"The interest in Daniel and the Revelation is to continue as long as probationary time shall last. God used the author of this book as a channel through which to communicate light to direct*

**minds to the truth.** Shall we not appreciate this light, which points us to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, our King?" Manuscript Releases, volume 1, p. 63

Does this mean that Ellen White endorsed every iota of what Uriah Smith wrote in Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation? Of course not! Her view of the king of the north was radically different than the new view which Uriah Smith introduced in 1871. Uriah Smith's view that the papacy had fallen never to rise again was not agreed to by Ellen White. Uriah Smith's view of the battle of Armageddon was wrong as were some of his interpretations of the trumpets. Ellen White recognized that in some of our early books there were matters that were not testing truths that needed to be corrected:

*"In some of our important books that have been in print for years, and which have brought many to a knowledge of the truth, there may be found matters of minor importance that call for careful study and correction. Let such matters be considered by those regularly appointed to have the oversight of our publications. Let not these brethren, nor our canvassers, nor our ministers, magnify these matters in such a way as to lessen the influence of these good soul-saving books. Should we take up the work of discrediting our literature, we would place weapons in the hands of those who have departed from the faith, and confuse the minds of those who have newly embraced the message. The less that is done unnecessarily to change our publications, the better it will be." (1910) Counsels to Writers and Editors, p. 151*

Like Uriah Smith, William Miller taught some things with which Ellen White disagreed. As we have noted in our study on the 'daily' William Miller taught that the first beast of Revelation 13 was pagan Rome and the second beast was an image of the Roman beast, papal Rome. He correctly taught that the 1260 years of papal dominion began in 538 and ended in 1798. But he took the number 666 (which has nothing to do with years but is rather the number of the beast's name) and applied it to the period of pagan Rome's dominion supposedly from 158 BC to 508 AD. Both of these dates are wrong. Pagan Rome began its dominion in 168 BC and ruled till 476 AD.

## **The 1850 Chart**

The 1850 chart was in some ways similar to the 1843 chart but there were also differences. First and most important, the 1843 date for the conclusion of the 2300 day prophecy was correctly altered (by inspiration, that is, by a study of the Bible) to 1844. Significantly, the 2520 non-prophecy was moved from the top right hand corner on the 1843 chart to a very small square in the lower right hand corner with very small letters and numbers. On the other hand, in the very center of the chart the year 457 BC is highlighted as well as the year 1844 AD. This clearly proves that the 2300 day prophecy was prominent and the 2520 prophecy was slowly fading away from the chart.

## **The 1863 Chart**

A little history will help us understand the rationale and the contents of the 1863 chart. On January 26, 1864 James White published a groundbreaking article (published in The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald) where he soundly rejected the 2520 prophecy (read the entire article at the end of this handout). About eight months before this, the General Conference delegates had voted on May 21, 1863 (at the same meeting where the SDA church was officially organized into a denomination), to have a new prophetic chart prepared. The chart was prepared and published in 1863 and the 2520 prophecy was eliminated.

Some who teach that the 2520 prophecy is a testing truth have affirmed that James White did not have the right to alter the chart; that only inspiration could do so, meaning Ellen G. White. And because Ellen White never overtly approved of the removal of the 2520 from the chart, James White was wrong in altering it. But this is a fallacious argument. We have already conclusively proved that the original mistake on the chart was altered by inspiration, that is, by a renewed study of Scripture, not by Ellen White. This being the case, why couldn't James White alter the chart once again if, by the study of inspiration, (the Bible) he proved that the 2520 was not a prophecy at all?

It is more than likely that some questioned why the 2520 had been removed from the new chart and this made it necessary for James White to write his article on January 26, 1864 explaining the reasons from inspiration (the Bible) for the omission.

### **Did Ellen White Endorse the 2520?**

It is argued that Ellen White endorsed Miller's view of the 2520 non-prophecy because she endorsed the 1843 chart. Nevertheless she never, not once, mentioned the 2520 non-prophecy in her writings or in her sermons. Further, she never even indirectly alluded to it. She endorsed to the time periods of the 1843 and 1850 charts that could be corroborated with a sound study of Scripture and history such as 457 BC, 538 AD, 1798 AD, the 1260 days, the 42 months and the kingdoms represented by the beasts of Daniel 7 with their respective dates.

She clearly endorsed the sequence of nations in Daniel 7:

*"Every nation that has come upon the stage of action has been permitted to occupy its place on the earth, that it might be seen whether it would fulfill the purpose of "the Watcher and the Holy One." Prophecy has traced the rise and fall of the world's great empires--Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. With each of these, as with nations of less power, history repeated itself. Each had its period of test, each failed, its glory faded, its power departed, and its place was occupied by another."* Education, pp. 176, 177

She endorsed all of the key dates in the prophecy of the 70 weeks and 2300 days:

*"Thus far every specification of the prophecies is strikingly fulfilled, and the beginning of the seventy weeks is fixed beyond question at 457 B.C., and their expiration in A.D. 34. From this data there is no difficulty in finding the termination of the 2300 days. The seventy weeks--490 days--having been cut off from the 2300, there were 1810 days remaining. After the end of 490 days, the 1810 days were still to be fulfilled. From A.D. 34, 1810 years extend to 1844. Consequently the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14 terminate in 1844."* Great Controversy, p. 328

She also endorsed 538, 1798, the 1260 days and the 42 months:

*"The periods here mentioned--"forty and two months," and "a thousand two hundred and threescore days"--are the same, alike representing the time in which the church of Christ was to suffer oppression from Rome. The 1260 years of papal supremacy began in A.D. 538, and would therefore terminate in 1798. At that time a French army entered Rome and made the pope a prisoner, and he died in exile. Though a new pope was soon afterward elected, the papal hierarchy has never since been able to wield the power which it before possessed."* Great Controversy, p. 266

### **Is everything that Miller taught gospel truth?**

There can be no doubt that William Miller was powerfully 'inspired' and used by God. But his views of prophecy were not infallible. By way of analogy, even though Martin Luther's writings contain many errors, Ellen White wrote regarding him:

*"Angels of heaven were by his side, and rays of light from the throne of God revealed the treasures of truth to his understanding. He had ever feared to offend God, but now the deep conviction of his condition as a sinner took hold upon him as never before."* Great Controversy, p. 122

There is no doubt that God guided the mind of William Miller in his search for truth:

*"God sent His **angel** to move upon the heart of a farmer who had not believed the Bible, to lead him to search the prophecies. **Angels of God** repeatedly visited that chosen one, to guide his mind and open to his understanding prophecies which had ever been dark to God's people. The commencement of the chain of truth was given to him, and he was led on to search for link after link, until he looked with wonder and admiration upon the Word of God. He saw there a perfect chain of truth."* Early Writings, p. 229

Regarding Miller Ellen White stated:

*"God sent His angel to move upon the heart of a farmer who had not believed the Bible, to lead him to search the prophecies. **Angels of God** repeatedly visited that chosen one, to guide his mind and open to his understanding prophecies which had ever been dark to God's people. The commencement of the chain of truth was given to him, and he was led on to search for link after link, until he looked with wonder and admiration upon the Word of God. He saw there a perfect chain of truth. That Word, which he had regarded as uninspired, now opened before his vision in its beauty and glory. He saw that one portion of Scripture explains another, and when one passage was closed to his understanding, he found in another part of the Word that which explained it. He regarded the sacred Word of God with joy, and with the deepest respect and awe."* The Story of Redemption, pp. 356, 357

### **Loopholes in the 2520 Non-Prophecy**

**The commencement date in question:**

Norman McNulty wrote an extensive article on the 2520 non-prophecy where he questioned the beginning date that Miller gave for this prophecy. States McNulty:

"According to the Millerites, 677 B.C. was the year in which King Manasseh (696-642 B.C.) was taken as a prisoner to Babylon (2 Chron. 33:11) and the 2520 years of punishment of God's people began. There is no historical evidence, however, that Manasseh was taken to Babylon in 677 B.C. This year goes back to the chronology of James Ussher in the 17th century."

Manasseh was coregent with his father Hezekiah for the first 10 years of his reign. His sole reign of 42 years began in 686 B.C. If his imprisonment and subsequent conversion occurred in 677 B.C., nine years after the beginning of his sole reign, he still reigned for more than 30 years after his conversion and return to Judah, but this is not the picture the Bible presents of Manasseh's reign. The Bible gives the impression that most of his life was spent in apostasy and that only toward the end of his life did he turn to the Lord. Speaking about Manasseh's conversion, Ellen White wrote that his "repentance, remarkable though it was, came too late to save the kingdom from the corrupting influence of years of idolatrous practices. Many had stumbled and fallen, never again to rise."<sup>2</sup>

Many Bible scholars believe that his imprisonment took place in connection with the rebellion of Assurbanipal's brother Samassumukin during the years 652–648 B.C. Yet, even if the date 677 B.C. were correct, it would not indicate the beginning of the punishment of God's people, because only the king was taken to Babylon, and only for a short time. He returned to Jerusalem, destroyed all the idols he had erected, and restored the worship of God (2 Chron. 33:15, 16). The kingdom of Judah continued another 80 years, until in 586 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and the temple of God. These 80 years included the reign of good King Josiah (640–609) whose reign can in no way be classified as a punishment on Judah [in fact God told Josiah that the punishment would not come until after his death]. In other words, the year 677 B.C. does not fit historically or chronologically."

The last judgment that is described in Leviticus 26 was that God would scatter Israel among the nations (26:33). This occurred with the northern tribes when Samaria was taken by the Assyrians in 723 BC. It took place with Judah from 605 BC till 586 BC when Nebuchadnezzar took captives and eventually destroyed Jerusalem.

### **Mistranslation of Terms**

The expression 'seven times' in Leviticus 26 is a mistranslation. The number seven in Scripture clearly represents completeness, totality or fullness (Naaman was totally cured when he dipped in the Jordan seven times, creation was completed in seven days, seven drops of blood were sprinkled on mercy seat for total cleansing, Israel marched around Jericho seven times and it was totally destroyed, Nebuchadnezzar heated the furnace seven times to its maximum heat).

God warned Israel that if they did not repent, God's wrath in its fullness would fall upon them. In other words the word 'seven' in Leviticus 26 does not denote a time period but rather the emphasis falls on the intensity of the punishment. James White brings out many important points from inspiration in his article which I will now share.

The Hebrew word *shevah*, 'seven', appears four times in Leviticus 26 but whenever it appears, it stands alone without any word to qualify it. The Hebrew word 'times' is *iddan* but this word does not appear in Leviticus 26. In other words the KJV and NKJV translation 'seven times' in Leviticus 26 is incorrect.

The word 'seven' is used to express the **intensity** of heat of the fiery furnace in Daniel 3:19. Obviously, Nebuchadnezzar did not have a thermometer to measure the heat of the furnace!

In Daniel 4:16 we have an example where the Hebrew word *shevah* is used in conjunction with the word *iddan*. The expression 'seven times' in Daniel 4 clearly refers to 'seven years' because *shevah* is qualified by *iddan*. Daniel 7:25 uses the word *iddan* three times in a symbolic context to refer to three and a half years.

It might be argued that in Leviticus 25:8 the word *shevah* is used to describe a **time period** but here the word *shevah* does not appear alone but rather is used in conjunction with *shannah* (years)

*"And you shall count seven [shevah] sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years; and the time of the seven sabbaths of years shall be to you forty-nine years."*

### **Not an Apocalyptic Prophecy**

Leviticus 26 is not an apocalyptic prophecy such as the ones we find in Daniel and Revelation. Only in the apocalyptic prophecies are the time periods to be interpreted in the light of the year/day principle unless there is clear evidence in the text itself to the contrary such as in Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:6.

The prophecy of Leviticus 26 concerns literal Israel and there is no indication whatsoever in the text that it applies to spiritual Israel. It is therefore to be interpreted in the same way as the 400 years (Genesis 15:13), the 120 years (Genesis 6:3), the 70-year captivity (Jeremiah 25:11, 12) and Nebuchadnezzar's 7 years of madness (Daniel 4:16). The only prophecies that were given to Israel that are to be understood on the basis of the year/day principle are the ones where there are clear markers in the text and as we have noted before, there are only two in the Old Testament.

### **No Clear Beginning or Ending Dates**

Apocalyptic prophecies such as the seventy weeks, the 1260 days, the 1290 days and the 1335 days have specific beginning and ending points but Leviticus 26 does not. It is speculative to guess where the beginning and ending points are. The prophecy of the seventy weeks, for example, clearly states:

*"Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince. . ."*

### **Conditionality**

Leviticus 26 constantly uses the conditional word 'if' (3, 4, 23, 24, 27, 28, 40, 42) but the great apocalyptic prophecies of Daniel and Revelation have no conditional language nor are they conditionally fulfilled.

### **When did the curses fall?**

As we have seen before, history makes it abundantly clear that the curses fell upon Israel in 586 BC when Jerusalem was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar and in 70 AD when Jerusalem was once again destroyed by Titus. Thus, by AD 70 Leviticus 26 had been fulfilled!

Daniel 9:13 makes clear that the curses of the covenant had already overtaken Israel in 586 BC and yet Israel was again restored after the captivity. The final curse befell Judah in 70 AD as a result of rejecting Jesus. This is why Paul explained that the wrath of God had fallen upon Israel **to the uttermost!** (1 Thessalonians 2:16). Jesus had already prophesied that the kingdom would be taken away from the Jewish nation and given to the Gentiles (Matthew 21:43). The chapter in The Great Controversy on the destruction of Jerusalem leaves not a shadow of a doubt that the wrath of God fell upon the Jewish nation in its fullest intensity as denoted by the number 7. Thus AD 70 marked the final fulfillment of Leviticus 26, not 1843 or even 1844!

### **7 times mentioned four times**

The expression seven times is not used only once in Leviticus 26; it is actually used four times in verses 18, 21, 24 and 27. If the seven times are mentioned four times and each seven represents 2520 years, would we not have to multiply 2520 by four? If we do this, then the prophecy of Leviticus 26 would be fulfilled in 10,080 years rather than 2520.

It makes far more sense that the number 7 is used four times to indicate that the punishments that would befall Israel would each time be of **greater intensity** with the purpose of leading Israel to repentance!

### **Is the 2520 the Longest Prophecy?**

It is rather obvious that if the 2520 were a true prophecy then it would be the longest in the Bible—even longer than the 2300 days. But which is really the longest? Ellen White unequivocally responds:

*"The experience of the disciples who preached the 'gospel of the kingdom' at the first advent of Christ had its counterpart in the experience of those who proclaimed the message of His second advent. As the disciples went out preaching, "The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand," so Miller and his associates proclaimed that **the longest and last prophetic period** brought to view in the Bible was about to expire, that the judgment was at hand, and the everlasting kingdom was to be ushered in. The preaching of the disciples in regard to time **was based on the seventy weeks of Daniel 9**. The message given by Miller and his associates announced the termination of **the 2300 days** of Daniel 8:14, of which the **seventy weeks** form a part. The preaching of each was based upon the fulfillment of a different portion of the **same great prophetic period**." Great Controversy, p. 351*

### **Is the 2520 a Testing Truth?**

What is the foundational prophecy of Seventh-day Adventist theology? Is it the 2520 or the 2300? Ellen White responds:

*"The scripture which above all others had been both the foundation and the central pillar of the advent faith was the declaration: "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." Daniel 8:14." Great Controversy, p. 409*

*"The correct understanding of the ministration in the heavenly sanctuary is the foundation of our faith." Letter 208, 1906*

*"The warning has come: Nothing is to be allowed to come in that will disturb the foundation of the faith upon which we have been building ever since the message came in 1842, 1843, and 1844. I was in this message, and ever since I have been standing before the world, true to the light that God has given us. We do not propose to take our feet off the platform on which they were placed as day by day we sought the Lord with earnest prayer, seeking for light. Do you think that I could give up the light that God has given me? It is to be as the Rock of Ages. It has been guiding me ever since it was given. Brethren and sisters, God lives and reigns and works today! His hand is on the wheel, and in His providence He is turning the wheel in accordance with His own will. Let not men fasten themselves to documents, saying what they will do and what they will not do. Let them fasten themselves to the Lord God of heaven. Then the light of heaven will shine into the soul-temple, and we shall see the salvation of God." General Conference Bulletin, April 6, 1903*

### **What are the landmarks?**

*"The passing of the time in 1844 was a period of great events, opening to our astonished eyes the cleansing of the sanctuary transpiring in heaven, and having decided relation to God's people upon the earth, [also] the first and second angels' messages and the third, unfurling the banner on which was inscribed, "The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." One of the landmarks under this message was the temple of God, seen by His truth-loving people in heaven, and the ark containing the law of God. The light of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment flashed its strong rays in the pathway of the transgressors of God's law. The nonimmortality of the wicked is an old landmark. I can call to mind nothing more that can come under the head of the old landmarks. All this cry about changing the old landmarks is all imaginary." Counsels to Writers and Editors, pp. 30, 31*

Some have taught that God cannot pour out the latter rain and His people cannot announce the loud cry unless they embrace the 2520 non-prophecy. Ellen White and the Bible both lay down the conditions for receiving the latter rain and it has nothing to do with the 2520. The conditions are the same as with the disciples in the Upper Room. Ellen White has warned about the danger of fanaticism:

*"I saw the necessity of the messengers, especially, watching and checking all fanaticism wherever they might see it rise. Satan is pressing in on every side, and unless we watch for him, and have our eyes open to his devices and snares, and have on the whole armor of God, the fiery darts of the wicked will hit us. There are many precious truths contained in the Word of God, but it is "present truth" that the flock needs now. I have seen the danger of the messengers running*

*off from the important points of present truth, to dwell upon subjects that are not calculated to unite the flock and sanctify the soul. Satan will here take every possible advantage to injure the cause."* Early Writings, p. 63

Immediately after this quotation Ellen White explained what it is that unites the flock and sanctifies the soul and it is not the 2520 prophecy:

*"But such subjects as the sanctuary, in connection with the 2300 days, the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, are perfectly calculated to explain the past Advent movement and show what our present position is, establish the faith of the doubting, and give certainty to the glorious future. These, I have frequently seen, were the principal subjects on which the messengers should dwell."* Early Writings, p. 63

## **Let us hear the End of the Matter**

In conclusion I might mention that Ellen White mentions the expression '2300 days' over one hundred and ten times on the CD Rom. Can anyone guess how many times she mentioned the 2520? None! She well knew that James White wrote an article against Miller's view of the 2520 and yet she did not reprove him. In fact she encouraged people to buy the 1863 chart where the 2520 was totally absent!!

*"We shall not hold our peace upon this subject. Our people will come up to the work. The means will come. And we would say to those who are poor and want books: Send in your orders, with a statement of your condition as to this world's goods. We will send you a package of books containing four volumes of *Spiritual Gifts*, *How to Live*, *Appeal to Youth*, *Appeal to Mothers*, *Sabbath Readings*, and the two large charts [of the Ten Commandments and the prophecies], with Key of Explanation. If you have a part of these, state what you have, and we will send other books in their places, or send only such of these as you have not. Send fifty cents to pay the postage, and we will send you the five-dollar package and charge the fund four dollars."* The Publishing Ministry, p. 372

## **James White's Complete Article on the 2520**

**The Review and Herald**

**"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."**

**BATTLE CREEK, MICH., THIRD-DAY, JANUARY 26, 1864,**

**JAMES WHITE, EDITOR**

### **The Seven Times of Lev. xxvi**

The prophetic period of Lev. xxvi, or what has been supposed to be such, has been no small object of study among prophetical expositors. It has been supposed that the expression, "seven times," in verses 18, 21, 24, 28, denoted a prophetic period of 2520 years, and that this period covered the time during which the throne of Israel should be and remain subverted and trodden down by oppressing powers. To rightly fix the commencement and termination of this period became therefore a matter of consequence. Where does it commence and where does it end have been questions of much study, and perhaps some perplexity.

These are not the questions, however, that we propose here to discuss; for there is a question lying back of these, which demands to be answered first; namely: Is there any prophetic period brought to view at all in Lev. xxvi? We claim that there is not, and will offer a few of what are to us very conclusive reasons for this position:

1. A series of judgments is threatened against Israel, in case they hearkened not unto God to do his commandments, before the expression, seven times, is introduced Verses 14-17. In these judgments is included being slain before their enemies, being reigned over by those that hated them, and fleeing when none pursued them. Now if the seven times were meant to cover the period of God's special judgments against Israel, especially of their captivity by foreign powers, these seven times should have been mentioned in connection with the first threatening of judgments of this kind. But this, as we have seen, is not the case.
2. After the threatening of these judgments, God says, verse 18, "And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins." Then follows an enumeration of the judgments to come upon them in fulfillment of this, different from the items of the first threatening, and increasing in severity.
3. If they would not for this hearken, seven times more plagues were threatened against them, "according to their sins" Verse 21. Then again follows an enumeration of judgments to correspond, more severe still than any preceding.
4. If they would not be reformed by these things, God threatened to punish them seven times more for their sins Verse 24. And in like manner with the foregoing, an enumeration of the judgments to be inflicted in fulfillment, immediately follows, more fearful still.
5. And if they would not hearken to God for all these things, he makes a final threat that would walk contrary to them in fury, and chastise them seven times for their sins Verse 28. And an enumeration of the judgments to be inflicted, again immediately follows, outdoing all before, in their terrible severity. Included among them were the eating of the flesh of their sons and daughters, making waste their cities, bringing the land into such desolation that their enemies should be astonished at it, scattering them among all nations, and drawing out a sword after them in all the lands of their dispersion. With fearful minuteness all this has been fulfilled, even to the eating the flesh of their own children, as in the terrible sieges that preceded the downfall of Jerusalem.

Thus we have, first, a series of judgments threatened against Israel, without the expression, seven times, and then the declaration four times made, that God would punish them seven times for their sins, each one on condition that the former did not lead to repentance, and each one containing its own specific enumeration of judgments, distinct from those that preceded, and regularly increasing in the severity of then denunciations. Now what is meant by this repeated expression of seven times? We reply, It denotes, not the duration of the punishment, but its intensity and severity. It is well expressed in the language of verse 21, thus: "I will bring seven times more plagues upon you according to your sins." The number seven denoting perfection, we are undoubtedly to understand by this expression, the fullness of their

punishment; that the measure of their national sins would in every case be fully equaled by the measure of their national calamities.

And this position is fully sustained by the original, as a brief criticism will show.

In references to the Hebrew, we learn from the Hebrew Concordance that the expression, seven times, in Lev. xxvi, comes from sheh-vag; and this word is expressly set down by Gesenius, in those texts, as an adverb, also in Ps. cxix, 164; Prov. xxiv, 16. In Dan. iv, 16, 25, the expression, seven times, twice occurs, where beyond question it means duration. Nebuchadnezzar was to be driven from men, and make his dwelling with the beasts of the field, until seven times should pass over him. There can be no mistaking that here the expression means a certain space of time; but here we find, not the adverb as in Lev. xxvi, but the noun, gid-dahn [*iddan*], defined by Gesenius, "Time, in prophetic language, for a year." In Dan. vii, 25, where a prophetic period is brought to view in the expression, "a time and times and the dividing of time," the same word is used. In Dan. xii, 7, where the same period is again brought to view, and in about the same language, we have another word, moh-gehd, defined by Gesenius, "Appointment of time. Spoken of a space of time, appointed and definite. In the prophetic style for a year." It will be seen by this definition, that this word is synonymous with the one used in Dan. vii, 25, as above referred to. Now if a period of time is meant by the expression, seven times, in Lev. xxvi, one of these words should and would most assuredly have been used. And the fact that neither of these words is there used, but another word, and that an adverb, places it beyond question that no such period is there intended.

The Greek is equally definite. The Septuagint has in Lev. xxvi, *heptakis*, which is an adverb, signifying seven times. In Dan. iv, 16, 25, for Nebuchadnezzar's seven times we have not *heptakis*, the adverb, but *heptakairoi*, a noun and its adjective. And in all cases where the word time occurs, denoting a prophetic period, as in Dan. vii, 25; xii, 7; Rev. xii, 14, it is from the noun *kairos*. Such a thing as a prophetic period based on an adverb is not to be found.

So then, there is no prophetic period in Lev. xxvi; and those who imagine that such a thing exists, and are puzzling themselves over the adjustment of its several dates, are simply beating the air. To ignore, or treat with neglect, a prophetic period where one is plainly given is censurable in the extreme. It is an equally futile, though not so heinous, a course, to endeavor to create one where none exists."

This is not the mere personal opinion of James White as indicated by the use of 'we' and 'our'. It is at least the opinion of the editorial board of the Review and Herald. In other words, White is writing the opinion of the scholars of the church.

Ellen White knew full well about her husband's article refuting the 2520 and yet she never corrected him. In fact she never even mentioned or even alluded to the 2520 in any of her writings or sermons. She did, however, promote the new charts:

Ellen White wrote this testimony in 1868: "We shall not hold our peace upon this subject. Our people will come up to the work. The means will come. And we would say to those who are poor and want books: Send in your orders, with a statement of your condition as to this world's goods. We will send you a package of books containing four volumes of Spiritual Gifts, How to

Live, Appeal to Youth, Appeal to Mothers, Sabbath Readings, and the two large charts, with Key of Explanation." The Publishing Ministry, p. 372

## **Uriah Smith's Explanation in 1897**

### **THE "SEVEN TIMES" OF LEVITICUS 26**

*Almost every scheme of the "Plan of the Ages," "Age-to-come," etc., makes use of a supposed prophetic period called the "Seven Times;" and the attempt is made to figure out a remarkable fulfillment by events in Jewish and Gentile history. All such speculators might as well spare their pains; for there is no such prophetic period in the Bible.*

*The term is taken from Leviticus 26, where the Lord denounces judgments against the Jews, if they shall forsake him. After mentioning a long list of calamities down to verse 17, the Lord says: "And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins" Verse 18. Verses 19 and 20 enumerate the additional judgments, then it is added in verse 21: "And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me: I will bring seven times more plagues upon you according to your sins." More judgments are enumerated, and then in verses 23 and 24 the threatening is repeated: "And if ye will not be reformed by me these things, but will walk contrary unto me; then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins." In verse 28 it is repeated again.*

*Thus the expression occurs four times, and each succeeding mention brings to view severer punishments, because the preceding ones were not heeded. Now, if "seven times" denotes a prophetic period (2520 years), then we would have four of them, amounting in all to 10,080 years, which would be rather a long time to keep a nation under chastisement.*

*But we need borrow no trouble on this score; for the expression "seven times" does not denote a period of duration, but is simply an adverb expressing degree, and setting forth the severity of the judgments to be brought upon Israel.*

*If it denoted a period of time, a noun and its adjective would be used, as in Dan.4:16: "Let seven times pass over him." Here we have the noun (times) and adjective (seven); thus, shibah iddan; but in the passages quoted above from Leviticus 26, the words "seven times" are simply the adverb (sheba), which means "sevenfold." The Septuagint makes the same distinction, using in Dan.4:16, etc., but in Leviticus simply the adverb.*

*The expression in Dan.4:16 is not prophetic, for it is used in plain, literal narration. (See verse 25.) Uriah Smith, Daniel and Revelation, 1897 edition, p. 784*